

Practice Sports-Ball Coverage Arrangement

Background of the Invention

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a covering which is adaptable to a sports ball such as a golf ball, a tennis ball or a baseball for use in a restricted area or a confined area.

Prior Art

Players of outdoor sports such as golf, tennis or even baseball may often wish they could practice those sports in a more confined area such as a driveway, an office or within the room of a house. Some manufacturers have come up with a way to satisfy certain needs of sports enthusiasts to permit them to play their favorite game. Such accommodation has been made with portable sports net, such as shown in U.S. Patent 5,427,381 to Macaluso et al or U.S. Patent 5,569,094 also to Macaluso. However such a portable sports net is not always readily utilizable in a confined area such as a house or an office, and the use of a standard sports ball therewith could even be dangerous.

It is an object of the present invention, to overcome the disadvantages of the sports equipment of the prior art.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a sports arrangement which may be practiced in a confined area such as a home or office.

It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide a sport arrangement which a sport player may assemble himself according to the particular sport that the player has in mind.

It is still yet a further object of the present invention to provide a sport ball adapter kit arrangement which is economical to practice and safe to use in a confined environment.

Brief Summary of the Invention

The present invention comprises a pre-cut pattern ball wrap for the smooth wrapping and complete covered enclosure of a sports ball by that ball wrap. The sports ball, in one preferred embodiment thereof, may for example, be a golf ball. The golf ball being of a particular size and diameter may also for this invention, be comprised of a low density polyethylene, or it may be comprised of a hollow sphere commonly known as a whiffle ball.

The ball wrap, in a first aspect of the present invention may be comprised of a first section of ball wrap of elongated shape having a pinched waist and curved ends defining a generally figure "8" shape thereto. The ball wrap for covering the sports ball may also have a second section of ball wrap in a shape similar to that of the first section. The first section and the second section generally each have a longitudinal axis. The longitudinal length of the first section and the second section as well as the length of the first section at the wider end portions thereof and the pinched waist portion thereof are configured so as to have their perimeters are in an adjacent relationship when the first section and the second section are wrapped about a sports ball, such as a golf ball or a tennis type ball.

Each first section of ball wrap and each second section of ball wrap in a preferred embodiment thereof, have a first or outer side thereof having a plurality of woven nylon loops thereon in a random manner which may be comprised of a knitted nylon loop material commonly sold under the trademark VELCRO. Each first section and second section of ball wrap each have a second or inner facing side which in a preferred embodiment has an adhesive applied thereon. The adhesive surface on the inner or back side of the first section of ball wrap and the second section of ball wrap may have a peel surface which is removable to expose the adhesive prior to its attachment to a sports ball by the sports participant.

In a further aspect of the present invention, a shaped ball wrap may be pre cut into an overlapping arrangement of the first section and second section so as to look much like a "four leaf clover", with four petals extending from a common central portion. Such a four leaf clover approach to a ball wrap would have an outer surface of loops thereon. That four leaf clover ball wrap fabric would preferably have an inner surface with a layer of adhesive thereon in a manner similar to the first embodiment of the present invention. Such a layer of adhesive on its inner surface would preferably have a removable film protective of material thereon to expose

that inner adhesive surface to the ball making it stickable thereto. The “four leaf clover” arrangement of the ball wrap would have its outer periphery so cut and formed so as to permit the wrap about and to closely conform to the ball’s outer surface so that the periphery of each pedal would closely align itself with its adjacent petal when the wrap is covering that ball's surface.

In yet a further aspect of the present invention, a plurality of such ball wrap components are included in a kit form wherein each set of ball wrap components are pre-sized to conform to the formal and official dimensional characteristics of the type of sport's ball for which they are intended. That is, the first section of ball wrap and second section of ball wrap for the overlapping four leaf clover component of ball wrap are pre-sized so as to engulf a golf ball. A further set of ball wrap portions and clover portions may be included in that kit so as to provide other type of sports ball wrap to completely adhere to the entire surface of a tennis ball or the like.

In yet a further aspect of the present invention, particularly for use in a confined area, there is preferably included with the kit, a flexible mat to be hung on a preferably vertically disposed surface, such as a wall, although such a mat may be disposed horizontally on a floor or sloped surface.

Portions of that flexible mat have securement locations for a nail or a pin to be attached therethrough for securement to that wall. Specific target areas on that flexible mat are designed with a corresponding hook material woven therein those target areas may be manufactured and sold under the trade name of VELCRO. By having such woven hook locations at specific locations on that flexible mat, such locations as the flag or green of a golf course at locations thereon permits the targeting and adherence of a safe indoor type sports ball utilized in a confined area in an enjoyable and safe manner.

The invention thus comprises a flexible ball wrap arrangement for the covering of the entire surface of a sports ball, comprising a first section of ball wrap having an outer surface and an inner surface and a second section of ball wrap having an outer surface and an inner surface. Each of the first and second sections of ball wrap are of generally figure 8 configuration so as to cover the entire surface of the sports ball. The outer surface of the first and second sections preferably have a knitted loop material thereon. The inner surface of the first and second sections preferably have a layer of adhesive thereon. The layer of adhesive preferably has a removable protective film covering thereon to keep the adhesive layer fresh and unused

until the wrap is applied to a sports ball. The first section of ball wrap preferably has a pinched waist mid-portion thereon. The second section of the ball wrap preferably has a pinched waist mid-portion thereon.

The first section and second section of ball wrap may in a further embodiment be unitary and have a common central portion thereon. The first section and said second section of the unitary embodiment may preferably be in the shape of a four leaf clover. The first section of ball wrap and the second section of ball wrap each have peripheries which are adjacent one another in a ball wrapped configuration. The first section of ball wrap and the second section of ball wrap are arranged in a kit and are supplied in several dimensions so as to fit a plurality of sports balls. The kit may include a flexible mat to function as a target backing for the sports ball when the sports ball is hit towards the mat. The mat preferably has at least one target area therein comprised of knitted hook or loop fibers so as to hold onto any wrapped sports ball struck thereagainst.

The invention may also include a flexible ball wrap wherein said sports ball is comprised of a sphere of low density polyethylene. The sports ball may also be comprised of a whiffle ball. The invention may also

comprise a sports ball kit for the safe playing and hitting of a regulation sized sports ball, comprising: a plurality of different regulation sized, lighter weight sports balls; and a adherable covering for smooth attachment to at least one of the sports balls, the covering having a hook and loop outer surface. The sports ball kit may include a sports ball target sheet having selected target portions thereon with corresponding hook and loop target portions thereon. The sports ball may be comprised of a whiffle ball. The sports ball may be comprised of a sphere of low density polyethylene, corresponding to a regulation sized sports ball.

Brief Description of the Drawings

The objects and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent when viewed in conjunction with the following drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a side elevational view of a sports ball, showing a ball wrap arranged therearound, a portion of that wrap exposed to show the surface of the sports ball underneath;

Figure 2 shows a plan view of a first section of a ball wrap and a second section of a ball wrap with their particular periphery shaped so as to together cover an entire surface of a sports ball;

Figure 3 is a view showing a further embodiment of a ball wrap in a further shaped configuration thereof; and

Figure 4 is a side elevational view of a target representation to be utilized with the sports ball of the present invention.

Detailed description of the Preferred Embodiments

Referring now to the drawings in detail, and particularly to figure 2, there is shown the present invention as a pair of pre-cut pattern ball wraps 10 and 12 for the smooth wrapping and complete covered enclosure of a sports ball 14, as represented in figure 1, by that ball wrap 10 and 12. The sports ball 14 in one preferred embodiment thereof, may for example, be a golf ball as represented in figure 1. A portion of one of the wraps 10 or 12 is shown cut away to display the actual surface of the sports ball thereunderneath. The golf ball 14 being of a particular size and diameter may also for this invention, be comprised of a low density polyethylene, or it may be comprised of a hollow sphere commonly known as a "whiffle" ball.

The ball wrap, in a first aspect of the present invention may be comprised of a first section of ball wrap 10 of elongated shape having a pinched waist 16 and curved ends 18 and 20 defining a generally figure "8" shape thereto, as represented in figure 2. The ball wrap for covering the sports ball may also have a second section of ball wrap 12 in a shape similar to that of the first section of ball wrap 10. The first section ball wrap 10 and the second section ball wrap 12 generally each have a longitudinal axis L1 and L2 respectively. The longitudinal length of the first section of ball wrap

10 and the second section of ball wrap 12 as well as the length of the first section of ball wrap 10 and 12 at the wider end portions 18 and 20 thereof and the pinched waist portion 16 thereof are configured so as to have their perimeters are in an adjacent relationship when the first section of ball wrap 10 and the second section of ball wrap 12 are wrapped about and adhered to a sports ball 14, such as a golf ball or a tennis type ball, as represented in figure 1.

Each first section of ball wrap 10 and each second section of ball wrap 12 in a preferred embodiment thereof, have a first or outer side 30 thereof having a plurality of woven nylon loops thereon in a random manner which may be comprised of a knitted nylon loop material commonly sold under the trademark VELCRO. Each first section of ball wrap 10 and second section of ball wrap 12 each have a second or inner facing side 32 which in a preferred embodiment has an adhesive applied thereon. The adhesive surface on the inner or back side 32 of the first section of ball wrap 10 and the second section of ball wrap 12 may have a peel surface 34 which is removable to expose the adhesive prior to its attachment to a sports ball by the sports participant.

In a further aspect of the present invention, a shaped ball wrap 40 may be pre cut into an overlapping arrangement of the first section and second section so as to look much like a “four leaf clover”, with an arrangement of four petals 42, 44, 46 and 48 extending from a common central portion 50, as represented in figure 3. Such a four leaf clover approach to a ball wrap 40 would have an outer surface 52 of knitted loops thereon. That four leaf clover ball wrap 40 of fabric would preferably have an inner surface 54 with a layer of adhesive 56 thereon in a manner similar to the first embodiment of the present invention. Such a layer of adhesive 56 on its inner surface 54 would preferably have a removable protective film of material 58 thereon to expose that inner adhesive surface 56 to a sports ball 14 making it stickable thereto. The “four leaf clover” arrangement of the ball wrap 40 would have its outer periphery so cut and formed so as to permit the ball wrap 40 to wrap about and to closely conform to the outer surface of a ball 14 so that the periphery of each petal 42, 44, 46 and 48 would closely align itself with its adjacent pedal when the ball wrap 40 is covering the surface of the sports ball 14.

In yet a further aspect of the present invention, a plurality of such ball wrap components may be included in a kit form wherein each set of ball

wrap components 10, 12 and/or 40 are pre-sized to conform to the formal and official dimensional characteristics of the type of sport's ball for which they are intended. That is, the first section of ball wrap 60 and second section of ball wrap 62 for the overlapping four leaf clover component of ball wrap 40 are pre-sized so as to engulf for example, a golf ball. A further set of ball wrap portions 10 and 12 and clover portions 40 may be included in that kit so as to provide other types/sizes of sports ball wrap to completely adhere to the entire surface of a tennis ball or the like.

In yet a further aspect of the present invention, particularly for use in a confined area, there is preferably included with the kit 70, a flexible mat 72 to be hung on a preferably vertically disposed surface, such as a wall 74, as represented in figure 4, although such a mat may be disposed horizontally on a floor or sloped surface. Portions of that flexible mat 72 have securement locations 76 for a nail or a pin to be attached therethrough for securement to that wall. Specific target areas 78 on that flexible mat 72 are designed with a corresponding hook material woven therein, those target areas 78 may be material manufactured and sold under the trade name of VELCRO. By having such woven hook locations at specific locations 78 on that flexible mat, such locations as for example, the flag or green of a golf course at

locations thereon permits the targeting and adherence of a safe indoor type sports ball utilized in a confined area in an enjoyable and safe manner.